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Commonweal

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GERALD VANN

Newburgh Writ Large

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Return to Jackson

CARL RACHLIN

A Catholic-Protestant Confrontation

GREGORY BAUM

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THE COMMONWEAL

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

Our New Look

WITH THIS issue The Commonweal marks two notable points in its history. The first, immediately obvious, is that as of this week the magazine is presenting itself to its readers with a new face, a new design from front cover to back. The second is that with this issue The Commonweal enters its thirty-eighth year of publication. Considered separately, both of these points, we think, are important and worthy of comment; taken together, however, the two points add up to something specially significant.

The new design must make its own case as The Commonweal's readers go through its pages. It is intended, needless to say, to make the magazine handsomer and more pleasing in its overall appearance, to make it easier to read and easier to use. To some extent the change reflects shifts and developments in visual taste and in the conventions of typographic design. To some extent it records further advance toward functionality and better understanding of how functionality is achieved. And to some extent, no doubt, the change in format represents merely the natural human desire for freshness and variety in the patterning of everyday life.

Along with this testament to change, however, and even to the principle of change, The Commonweal would emphasize its simultaneous dedication to those things which are changeless. In its thirty-eighth year, as in the year of its founding, the magazine is animated by its commitment to Christian values in "public affairs, literature and the arts." As Catholics, its editors today as then engage themselves as journalists in a world which has meaning and value in that it was Created and Redeemed.

Also unchanged is what has been described as "The Commonweal approach" to the task it sets itself. The Commonweal's "approach" is more easily demonstrated than explained, no doubt, but perhaps its key aspect is an awareness of its own unique identity. The magazine is generally referred to as a Catholic publication, and it is normal and inevitable that it should be, since its editors are Catholic laymen whose views are consciously and unconsciously informed by their religious convictions. Then, too, most of the writers who contribute to The Commonweal are also Catholics, including many priests and religious and some of the most distinguished Catholic writers in the United States and Europe. Moreover, religion and religious questions quite obviously form a significant part of the magazine's content.

There is, however, nothing in the slightest degree "official" about The Commonweal's status and nothing in the slightest degree "officially Catholic" about the views on temporal affairs put forth by its editors or contributors. It can of course be said of most Catholic publications that there is nothing in the slightest degree "officially Catholic" about the views put forth by their editors and contributors, but this is a fact often forgotten. The editors of The Commonweal try never to lose sight of this fact and never to let it be misunderstood by the magazine's readers.

THUS when the Catholic laymen who edit The Commonweal speak out on a specific problem of the temporal order—on United States foreign policy, or medical care for the aged, or the Freedom Riders—in one sense they speak only for themselves. The Church as such almost never takes an official position on particular, concrete questions of public policy and, therefore, almost never can there be such a thing as *the* Catholic position on these questions of prudential judgment. At the same time, however, the views of The Commonweal clearly express *a* Catholic position on such questions, one of the innumerable positions which Catholics can and do take whenever such controversial problems are debated.

Inevitably, though, in any discussion of the application of Catholic principles to specific, practical problems, reference will be made to "the mind of the Church." This is as it should be, but the conception of

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"the mind of the Church" in these matters, real and important as it is, is widely misunderstood. The Church is a living, dynamic organism; its mind—not on the immutable truths which have been entrusted to it by God but on the application of these truths to ever different problems in ever different contexts—is far from the frozen monolith it is often represented to be by simplists within as well as without. It develops and moves as the world itself develops and moves. Various points of view are constantly being advanced, discussed and debated *within* the Church, in a kind of ceaseless internal dialogue.

Some of these views may be described as liberal (we hope it is no longer necessary to go through a recital on nineteenth-century philosophical Liberalism and its difference from twentieth-century political liberalism as an attitude instead of an ideology); some of them may be described as conservative. It is part of The Commonweal's fundamental character that in any such rough division of attitudes and tendencies, it would normally be found on the "liberal" side. That is to say, the biases of The Commonweal, if that term may be used, are in the direction of liberty, the rights of the individual, the protection of the underdog; in the direction of openness, flexibility, the pragmatic solution so long as it does no violence to basic moral principles; in the direction of truth wherever it may be found, since all truth, wherever it may be found, is God's truth.

These dispositions, too, remain unchanged. In the more than thirty-seven years of The Commonweal's life, editors have come and gone, the make-up of the magazine has been revised and revised again, burning issues of the day have flared up and faded out. But The Commonweal itself, we believe, and the meaning of its role in American journalism, remain today what they always were.

Entering its thirty-eighth year, The Commonweal must face the new difficulties and new challenges which confront every man in the year 1961, and the Christian, perhaps, even more starkly. Conscious of this fact, and of the responsibilities which flow from it, the editors of today's Commonweal can do no more than present to its friends and readers a magazine at once new and different and yet unalterably devoted to the ideas which have sustained it always.

A Texas Weathervane?

THE VICTORY of Henry B. Gonzalez in the San Antonio congressional election was both gratifying and reassuring. It was gratifying in the sense that Mr. Gonzalez is a liberal Democrat by conviction and a Mexican by descent. Neither of these characteristics has, traditionally, been an asset in a Texas election. The victory was reassuring in providing at least some evidence that the right-wing surge in Texas politics is not as powerful as its supporters claim it to be. The recent election of the Republican ultra-conservative Senator John G. Tower, in short, is not necessarily an omen for the political future.

San Antonio is, of course, not Dallas or Houston, both strongholds of conservative movements. San Antonio, by contrast, has a high percentage of Mexican-Americans and a strong Democratic organization. Nevertheless, the Republicans made a vigorous fight of it, importing former President Eisenhower to campaign for Mr. Gonzalez's opponent, John W. Goode, Jr. The Democrats, in return, countered with Vice President and Mrs. Johnson. Both parties, whether rightly or wrongly, saw the election as an important one and both parties gave it a high priority.

Just how significant Mr. Gonzalez's victory is remains, naturally, open to doubt. One thing, though, is evident: the support of Senator Tower and the messianic Senator Barry Goldwater is still no guarantee of victory even in Texas. When Senator Tower was elected in May—running on what the *National Review* unblushingly called a "straight *National Review* ticket"—there was a brief flurry of panic and apprehension that reactionary Republicanism was becoming a major political force. While it is still far too early to discount this possibility, the election of Mr. Gonzalez ought at least to dampen conservative optimism and relieve liberal Democratic anxieties. The conservative wave, as ever, is still one-tenth water, two-tenths foam, and seven-tenths publicity—give or take some foam in Texas.

Another Congo Crisis

EVER SINCE attaining its independence, the former Belgian Congo has posed difficult problems before the United Nations. Dag Hammarskjold met his death on a Congo mission, and now his successor, U Thant of Burma, elected Acting Secretary General until 1963, finds a critical situation there immediately upon taking office.

The present Congo problem is a thorny one with roots in the colonial policies of the European powers. One dimension is the concentration of Congolese productivity in Katanga. All along, the central Congolese government of Leopoldville has been opposing Katangan separatism, which would deprive it of substantial revenues from that comparatively wealthy province. Encouraged by the Belgians, Mr. Tshombe and his Katangans have resisted incorporation into the central Republic as they are not willing to bear the heaviest share of general Congolese government expenses.

Under Mr. Hammarskjold the U.N. forces in the Congo tried vainly to bring Katanga into line. In order to secure the return of the two hundred Irish soldiers

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Mr. Tshombe's well-equipped and well-trained troops had captured, the U.N. recently agreed to a cease-fire agreement on none too favorable terms. Now Katangan troops, with a tiny air force manned by whites and some other white mercenaries, have apparently inflicted a bad defeat on troops from Leopoldville which were attempting to quash Katangan separatism. At the same time Dr. Sture C. Linner of Sweden, director of U.N. Congolese operations, complained to the Security Council of Katangan air raids that were violations of the cease-fire agreement. Finally, there are disturbing reports from Kasai province of atrocities committed by some of the defeated Leopoldville troops against Belgian civilians of both sexes, many of them in the employ of the central Congolese government.

As if Tshombe's so-far successful resistance were not problem enough, there is another complicating factor from the North. The Stanleyville province, formerly headed by the late Patrice Lumumba and now by Vice Premier Antoine Gizenga, has dissident tendencies of its own which are encouraged by the Soviet Union. Stanleyville is all for the subjugation of Katanga but otherwise remains aloof. The central Congolese authorities threatened to dismiss Mr. Gizenga from his post if he failed to return from Stanleyville by November 5 (when he left Leopoldville, October 5, to "straighten out his affairs" at home, he had been told to return within eight days). Both Katanga and Stanleyville present substantial obstacles to Congolese national unity, due to Belgian and Russian influences respectively but with appreciable local support.

A number of the newly-independent African nations, beset with their own internal tensions and outside pressures, fear that separatism in the Congo would lead to other damaging secessions. They are taking the lead in bringing the Congo question before the Security Council. Many other members believe that a Congo solution is essential if the U.N. is to maintain the prestige it will require to meet the other international challenges that lie ahead.

Competition and Foreign Trade

THE FIRST salvos have now been fired in the approaching battle over the renewal of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act due to expire in June of '62. It will, without doubt, be one of the sharpest and nastiest battles the Administration will have to undertake during the coming year. And it involves, unfortunately, issues of extreme complexity: issues difficult for the public to comprehend and susceptible of misleading and hysterical sloganeering. With commendable foresight, the Administration has made an early move to present the position it will argue when the battle lines are actually drawn.

Its argument, as presented recently by George W. Ball, Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, wisely centers on the expanding European Common Market. Quite apart from the larger question of Western unity, the European Common Market is bound to pose a major competitive problem for the United States. Put simply, the United States may soon find itself priced out of the European market, unable to offer its goods at a price competitive with those of Common Market members. Not only would this be extremely dangerous from an economic point of view, it could also engender serious political friction.

Thus put, the Administration has a strong and cogent argument for a revised trade policy. Over against this, quite obviously, is the reality of a continuing high unemployment rate at home. By next year the Department of Labor expects that there will be five million unemployed, very close to seven per cent of the working force. In this ominous piece of data the protectionists will have their strongest card to play. Whatever may be said in favor of granting the President greater freedom to lower American tariffs as a long range policy, the fact that such a policy may mean less jobs here and now gives the tactical advantage to the protectionists. They are sure to make the most of it and to play as well on a rising isolationist sentiment.

Even more pressing than the immediate problem of the renewal of the Trade Agreements Act itself is the necessity of getting an early start on the Common Market problem. A simple renewal of the Act as it now stands would be merely a stop-gap measure. Will Clayton and Christian A. Herter have said, in a report prepared for the Joint Congressional Economic Committee, that the Act itself is "hopelessly inadequate" and have called for the United States to "take a giant step" in its trade policy. The giant step they propose is a "trade partnership" with the European Common Market. Only such a partnership, they believe, will enable the United States to meet the competitive challenge of the Common Market. And only such a partnership, in the perspective of the Soviet trade offensive, can assure the continued economic superiority of the West.

It is difficult to see how one could deny the logic of their position. It is equally apparent that a long delay in meeting the Common Market challenge will greatly reduce our bargaining power. Taken together, the position enunciated by Mr. Ball and the independent report of Messrs. Clayton and Herter point unerringly toward the need of a bold new direction for American trade policy. The last thing that can be said about their stand is that it is just another visionary and internationalist economic scheme. On the contrary, it is rooted in some hard economic facts of life. These facts are, we believe, even harder than our domestic unemployment rate. We had better face them now while we still have time.

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Citizen Walker

ONE WOULD have to be unfeeling, I think, not to see elements of tragedy in the case of Major General Edwin A. Walker. He has spent thirty years in his country's service as a professional soldier; during this period he has served with distinction here and abroad, in peace and in war.

There can be no question about General Walker's patriotism, nor any doubt about the depth of his convictions. Indeed, I would feel more comfortable about General Walker if I were less convinced of his sincerity. Charlatans can be dealt with, and without too much trouble; it is the ideologue, the political true believer, who splits nations and leads factions.

Despite everything that happened General Walker remains supremely confident that he is right and all who oppose him are wrong. He is, to my mind, an oddly atypical figure—as American as Texas in some respects, yet curiously non-American in others. I mean no offense to General Walker in saying it, but to me he seems more like the political generals of Europe—de Gaulle or Salan, say—than like Generals Marshall or Bradley or Eisenhower, all of whom were "typically American" and all of whom were essentially non-political—including, perhaps preeminently, General Eisenhower, who never seems less like himself than when he delivers banal bits of Republican partisanship.

General Walker is one of a breed comparatively new on the American scene, the political or, perhaps more accurately, the ideological generals. In any country, the members of this small band have one thing in common: no matter what the people think or elected officials decide, the generals are convinced that they know better, whether the case in point is Korea or Berlin, Indochina or Algeria. General Walker was simply following this tradition when he said he was resigning from the Army because he wanted to be free of "the power of little men who, in the name of the country, punish loyal service to it."

This is the pattern. Political generals never resign because of policy disagreements; they resign because "little men" are trying to keep them from serving the country. And behind the "little men" who thwart them the generals usually see the shadowy figures of conspiracy. Thus when General Walker in 1959 submitted a resignation he later withdrew, he ascribed his desire to resign to the presence of "fifth column conspiracy and influence in the United States."

In view of the international climate, it is not surprising that America has begun to produce ideologically-minded military men. At the same time it is more imperative than ever that we preserve the non-political character of the military and retain our national tradition of civilian control of the armed forces. This means we have to see cases like that of General Walker in their true perspective.

Military investigation found that General Walker had in public speeches made "inflammatory and derogatory statements" about various prominent American public figures, including former President Harry S. Truman; his troop indoctrination program showed remarkable similarity to the line of the John Birch Society, of which the General is a member; he tried to influence the voting of his troops and their families in the 1960 Congressional election. He was therefore relieved of his command in Germany and given an "oral admonishment"—a light penalty chosen because of his record of service.

It was after this curb was placed on his efforts to indoctrinate troops that General Walker submitted his resignation. Now Edwin A. Walker, U.S. citizen, is free to do what Edwin A. Walker, Major General and professional soldier, was not: put forward his political views and attempt to persuade others to share them—perhaps, as some have already suggested, by running as the Republican candidate for the Senate from the state of Texas.

To my mind, General Walker's decision to resign and the Army's speedy acceptance of his resignation were exactly right. If the General's followers cannot see that there is an essential difference between pursuing political activities as a civilian and doing the same thing in uniform, they must be completely insensitive to American tradition.

The entire Walker affair will receive an airing later this month by a Senate subcommittee. At that time I hope the group will also concern itself with the recent proliferation around the country of various "Birch-type" educational programs, aimed at the general public and either held on military bases or presented with the "endorsement" of the local military commander. Here the issue is much bigger than the character and orientation of the programs themselves. The Birch-type approach to Communism is nonsense, which hurts rather than helps the nation, but if these programs were the best in the world, the question would still remain: do we really want the armed forces to carry on adult educational programs for the civilian population?

Simply to ask the question, it seems to me, shows how widely the practice departs from our traditions. Indeed, as far as I am concerned, one of the most bizarre aspects of this entire controversy is that men who call themselves conservatives are crusading for what amounts to a radical extension of governmental power.

JAMES O'GARA

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Chaos and Disintegration Imply the Possibility of a New Beginning

The Christian Paradox

GERALD VANN

WE ARE LIVING in an age of *Angst*, of anxiety and dread; and one reason for that *Angst* is obvious enough: the threat of nuclear catastrophe, perhaps of the extinction of life on our planet, hangs over us like a dense pall of smoke. That is not the whole story. There are other reasons for fear, equally valid but less obvious: we carry within us the seeds of self-destruction, of the decay and disintegration of our own selves and our own society, but it is easy, and it is more comfortable, to blind ourselves to these and to project all our fears onto an external enemy, for in that way if we cannot escape our fears we can at least escape our sense of guilt.

Yet here too if we open our eyes the facts are obvious enough: the magnificent achievements of our age, especially in the realm of science, are offset by a process of destruction, of inner impoverishment and disintegration so profound as to constitute a real threat of suicide of the spirit. For many years wise men have been warning us, but we have not heeded them. The Russian philosopher Berdyaev spoke of our situation as being not a crisis in human history but the crisis of human history; the German theologian Guardini has described how modern man has lost his "living contact with real things" and become unable to hear "the messages of things" since they have become for him simply "objects of pursuit and possession, of commerce or research"; from the psychological point of view Jung has shown how, in the aftermath of rationalism and *scientisme* in which we are living, we have more or less reduced our psychic life to one quarter of its totality, its four functions, concentrating on reason to the detriment of intuition, sense and feeling, and limiting reason itself to the plane of the purely practical, the utilitarian, the commercial.

All this is so obvious, to all but the moronic or the wilfully blind, that a recent editorial in *Life* could state as a fact needing no proof that we are living in a "dark age of denatured technology." Ours is, in other words, the world of the rat-race, and the rat-race involves the denaturing alike of the world and of man himself.

In obedience to the demands of the rat-race we endure the lunatic noise and frenzied activity, the ulcers and the neuroses, of modern urban existence; we denude the forests, pollute the rivers, sterilize the soil, and turn green hills and valleys into slagheaps and slums; and in so doing we degrade and denude ourselves: we massacre language to meet the squalid requirements of commercials and tabloids; we think of poetry, painting, music as being for the birds or the (closely related and despicable) eggheads; we equate beauty with cheesecake and sex with kicks; we deride as waste of time the "humane letters" the cultural values, which for the rest of the world have always meant and still mean the difference between civilization and barbarism, and it never occurs to us that to destroy the humanities is to destroy humanity.

DOSTOIEVSKY WROTE of how our roots lie in other worlds and if we are cut off from those roots we begin to fear life and then to hate it; D. H. Lawrence described how we are cut off even from our roots in this world, in nature and in the family of mankind, so that we come to fear and then to hate one another; Menotti in his opera "The Consul" paints an appalling picture of the destruction by bureaucracy of human personalities and human community. Homeless, rootless, imprisoned in the rat-cage, modern man sooner or later wakes up to the fact that life is meaningless: and it is this meaninglessness which is the deepest cause of his terror and his despair.

When life is meaningless there is indeed nothing left but despair. We are told in the Gospel of how Christ turned to the two disciples of John the Baptist who were following Him and asked them: "What are you looking for?" This is the question to which modern man so often fails to find any answer; but they knew the answer: "Where are you living?" they asked in their turn, and when He replied "Come and see" they went, and saw, and stayed with Him: they were saying in effect that their search was not for a "what" but for a "who," for Himself. Since He (as Peter was later to affrm) had "the words of life," the secret of life, He was Himself the "meaning" for which they and all humanity were looking. So in the opening words of his

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gospel John tells us: "In the beginning was the Word," the eternal *Logos;* and *logos* means "meaning"; so that when the Word became human flesh and blood and lived for a time amongst men and they saw His glory, they were seeing in that human flesh the answer to the question, and the quest, of humanity down through the ages: they had found the "words of life," the meaning of life, because they had found the Word who is Life.

So Christ Himself said that He had come to bring life to men, life "full and rich and abounding"; but life implies process, growth, a beginning and a becoming; and both in His teaching and in the actual pattern of His earthly life He makes it clear that life is attained through death, light is born out of darkness; and as in *Genesis* the original creation is pictured in terms of a cosmos fashioned from the dark, formless waters of chaos, and of man fashioned from the formless slime of the earth, so in the New Testament the re-creation of man is pictured as demanding, on our part, a humble acceptance of the fact of our own darkness and chaos and of our inability to achieve life of ourselves, our need to be given life, to be made whole.

This is the essential Christian paradox—and it explains for instance how the Cardinal Primate of Poland, speaking indeed out of darkness, can say that only the determinist, the fatalist, can be without hope, the Christian must always live in hope—that the acceptance of the fact of chaos and of our powerlessness to remedy the chaos and achieve wholeness is at the same time a triumphant affirmation of the power and the will of the re-creative Word to bring life out of our death, to bring light and glory out of our darkness and wholeness of life out of our crippled nature and richness out of our impoverishment. For the Christian, therefore, chaos and disintegration imply, not ultimate defeat and despair, but a hope and a challenge, the possibility of a new beginning, as night holds within itself the expectancy of dawn and winter the promise of spring.

Christianity is not an "otherworldly" religion in the sense of fixing all its hopes on another life, striving to attain eventual happiness in heaven by being as miserable as hell on earth. The "new life" brought to man by Christ, the life which is eternal, God's life, is brought, is offered, here and now, to be lived and enjoyed—not in its fullness but in some measure—here and now. On the other hand Christianity is not a hedonist escapism, nor does it blind its eyes to the sorrow and tragedy and evil which weigh down the world. But it declares that tragedy is not ultimate; and that pain and darkness can be and are meant to be the raw material of happiness and glory. And when it declares that not man but only God can achieve this transfiguration of darkness into glory and death into life, it is not asserting that man has no part to play in the process; to say that man must be humbly receptive is not to say that he must be purely passive.

The re-creative Word demands on man's part a responsive word, a loving acceptance of the re-creative process and of all the destructive aspects of that process, the fire which consumes in order to quicken, the sword which cuts and cleaves in order to make whole, the dark waters which engulf and smother in order to create. There can be no healing without the will to be healed, no attainment of wholeness without the will to be made whole; and that willing implies acceptance of the precedent cutting to pieces and reduction to chaos, for man cannot be re-created until he has killed his own egoism and ego-reliance and accepted his own nothingness. Dr. Leopold Stein, in his *Anatomy of Eve,* tells of how two little children were overheard discussing the rhyme about Humpty Dumpty which had just been read to them, and one of them was weeping bitterly over his sad fate, but the other one scolded her (for, as Dr. Stein comments, children are often capable of far deeper insights than grown-ups) for not understanding that he *had* to be broken into pieces in order to be put together again.

AT THIS point also, therefore, the Christian reaction to our present chaos is diametrically opposed to that of the modern world: for as on the one hand the recognition of chaos inspires not anxiety and despair but hope, so on the other hand the quest for life evokes not the frenzied activism of the ratrace but the stillness of receptivity, the ability to look and listen and learn, to be docile as the clay in the potter's hands.

This basic attitude is pictured for us in the way in which the Word-made-flesh came into the world: the darkness of the stable-cave at Bethlehem, the helplessness of the baby in swaddling-clothes. The *Book of Wisdom* tells us: "While all things were in quiet silence and night was in the midst of its course," then the "almighty Word leapt down from His heavenly throne"; and an old Christmas carol sings of how

> He came al so stil
> Where His mother was,
> Like dew in April
> That falleth on the grass.

The ratrace-world reverses the Christian attitude which treasured silence and stillness as the necessary conditions of attaining vision, understanding, wisdom, depth; it cannot bear silence but must have the radio blaring all day long, it cannot bear stillness but, like the Red Queen in *Alice,* must be always going faster and faster in order to arrive nowhere—for the din and the incessant commotion tend to make thought (in any profound sense) impossible, and thought is the supremely unbearable thing. How indeed can thought be bearable if it means recognizing that everything is empty, futile, meaningless, and that one is as homeless and purposeless, as fugitive and desiccated as a dead leaf drifting aimlessly in the wind?

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IN THAT paradox-language which is the idiom of the gospels Christ tells us we must be both childlike and mature, we must be docile and receptive like a small child and yet be (not uncomprehending servants but) His friends, with a mature understanding of the "meaning," the purposes, He has revealed to us. We must be contemplative, still and silent, able to look, listen, absorb, assimilate, and yet be active (for always there is work to be done until the night comes, when one can work no longer)—but active, not activist, for the action must spring from and express the awareness, the contemplation, like the activity of the artist. (The activism of the ratrace is never contemplative, only predatory, compulsive, and in the last resort destructive). Activism tends of its nature to become more and more superficial; only the activity which springs from and co-exists with stillness tends to an ever-increasing profundity and therefore richness of creativity. So, as Eliot says in *Four Quartets:*

> We must be still and still moving
> Into another intensity
> For a further union, a deeper communion
> Through the dark cold and the empty desolation,
> The wave cry, the wind cry, the vast waters. . . .

A deeper communion: to be predatory is to be homeless. Science has enabled us to exploit the earth's resources, but that is a poor substitute for knowing and loving the earth as our home; science may enable us to invade and conquer the universe, but that too will be a poor substitute for being at home in the cosmos. *Scientisme* gave us the arrogant illusion of self-sufficiency, but now, in the gray morning-after of our *Angst*, we know the abyss of loneliness which comes of rejecting our deepest roots, of being no longer at home in God.

But the Word was made flesh and there is a new beginning, and if he wills, the prodigal can return to his home. The dry bones can live again. Yet this can be so only if we utter the responsive word to the Word, only if we renounce our spurious self-sufficiency and accept the destructive and creative Fire and willingly live out the transfiguring process which the Fire effects within us. St. John in his gospel shows us what this process involves, in his account of the seven miraculous events which he calls the "signs" performed by Christ: the wedding at Cana, the curing of the nobleman's son, the cripple at the pool of Bezatha, the feeding of the five thousand, the walking on the waters of the sea of Galilee, the blind man, the raising to life of Lazarus.

John always refers to these events as signs, never as miracles, for in them Christ is not simply supporting His claims or His teaching by manifestations of power which have no intrinsic connection with them: the signs are themselves statements of the claims and the teaching, they are signs pointing not to something beyond themselves but to what is implicit in themselves. And there are seven signs; and in the language of symbol, seven signifies completeness, a single whole; so that the seven signs make up one complete manifestation or communication, like a tale told in seven chapters or a poem comprising seven stanzas. And what the series tells of, in a dramatic crescendo of more and more explicit and ultimate conflict between life and death, light and darkness, wholeness and corruption, is that transfiguring of man which the coming of the Light, the birth of the Word, makes possible.

CHRISTMAS IMPLIES the marriage of heaven and earth: the coming of the Word, like the rain that bedews and renews the soil of the earth, restores vitality and fertility to the soul of man; and so the first sign strikes the keynote of the whole series, which is joy in the regaining of life and youth and hope and meaning, and as it were states the aim of the whole series, which is the transforming of the lifeless water of lost humanity into all that wine means for us in terms of heightened vitality and vigor and creative zest and the love and fellowship which cast out loneliness and fear.

The second sign begins the explication of the conditions of this transformation: the young son of the nobleman is sick and feverish (like our neurotic, frenzied ratrace-world) but he is cured when his father finds faith in the true sense of the word—not just confidence in Christ's power but a total acceptance of, and self-dedication to, Christ Himself—and when our Lord tells him his son is cured He in fact uses the words spoken by Elijah when he had brought back to life the son of the widow of Sarephta: "Your son lives." The German poet Hölderlin wrote: "All hope lies in youth regained": the boy in this sign symbolizes that rejuvenation, and the condition of it is faith in the sense not just of an intellectual assent to facts and truths about Christ but of a personal and total acceptance of Christ—an acceptance of the transfiguring Fire and of the meaning and direction which the Fire gives to life on earth.

But the world is not only sick and feverish: it is deformed, crippled, and like the cripple at the pool of Bezatha it is immobilized by its infirmity, incapable of healing itself. Christ asks us therefore: Do you really want to be cured? Have you, not just a vague nostalgic yearning for your lost integrity, but a determination to accept and live and do all that the process of integration implies? (We are all deformed because disintegrated: compounded of warring factions, irreconcilable drives; if we are to achieve integrity our dark side has to be transfigured and so made reconcilable with the light.) It is when this readiness, this will-to-accept, is affirmed that man is "made whole"; and then, being made whole, he becomes mobile; he can pick up his bed and walk.

Creative energy is given; but like the body's vigor it must be sustained by food. In the next sign the five thousand are given bread; but this material bread is contrasted with the "living" Bread which satisfies the

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deeper hunger of the spirit; and when the Jews, eager to have this living Bread but thinking, like modern man, in activist terms asks what "works" they must do to acquire it, Christ tells them that one work only is asked of them, and that work (once again) is faith.

A crowd is fed; but when the food given is the living Bread the crowd becomes a family: when men are united with Christ they are united in Christ. And the restoring of family unity is followed in this episode by the restoration of man's cosmic home, the healing of the hostility of nature, when, in a setting like that of *Genesis*—the darkness, the rough sea, the fierce wind—Christ walks upon the waters and through that peaceful communion with and loving dominion over the forces of nature heals the fears and the loneliness of the disciples. In another gospel-story the re-creative Word commanded the waters: "Peace; be still": as in the sign of the boy He stills the fevered soul of mankind, so here he stills the turbulence of man's environment; and in this inward and outward tranquility, his home restored to him, his "house being now at rest," man finds his vision restored; being still, he can see, he can learn the Reality, deeply and fully, which gives life its meaning.

"Where there is no vision the people perish": but the despair inherent in a meaningless existence is cured when the Light gives sight to the eyes; and in the sign of the blind man Christ takes clay, the sculptor's thumbs rub in the living eyeballs, as before, in the beginning, God had taken the slime of the earth and fashioned the living man; and now, out of "the dark cold and the empty desolation," out of "the wave cry, the wind cry, the vast waters" man walks renewed in youth and vigor and freedom and creative vision and strength, his family restored to him, his home restored to him, his hope restored to him because now in his new-found vision he realizes that death and darkness need never be final, can always be a transient, creative moment, the moment of sleep which is the germination of new achievements, of a new day.

SO IT IS that in the final sign Christ says of the dead Lazarus that he is but sleeping; he tells Martha that her brother will rise again not just in some remote eschatological future moment but here and now, for "I am resurrection, here and now, because I am Life"; and so the dead man comes out from the cave-grave, from the tomb which is also, like the Bethlehem cave, the womb of life; and he is loosed from the gravebands which shackle his freedom and is free to go home. And when next we meet him it is in a setting which parallels that of the wedding at Cana: a feast, a banquet, given for Jesus by His friends, during which the whole house is filled with the scent of the sweet-smelling oils which Mary pours out over Christ's feet just as later, on the first Whitsunday, the whole house was filled with the wind and the fire of the Holy Spirit.

There is no emptiness any more, no loneliness any more; life is now full of meaning since it is simultaneously life temporal and life eternal, and to have, here and now, the life which is eternal means to have loving knowledge of God and His Christ, to see the Word of Life and therefore to have the words of life, the meaning of life, and to share that vision with all God's family. Everything and every moment has meaning in so far as it is eternal, and it is eternal in so far as it lives or is lived in God, which is to say in Love. The new re-created man is the newly creative man; and his supreme creation is the creation of love. The Christian moral ideal is to be found, not in the activist's feverish multiplication of "works" or the legalist's concern with external conformity to a code of external behavior; but in the attempt to make every action meaningful by making it a way of saying "I love you" to God and to all creation. To do that is to make every moment a new beginning, a further exploration and discovery; it is to make every moment a new adventure, a further journey, while still remaining at home and at peace. It is to "be still and still moving," because it means living in Love and Love is boundless, a home one never leaves yet is always discovering afresh:

> We shall not cease from exploration;
> And the end of all our exploring
> Will be to arrive where we started
> And know the place for the first time.
>
> (*Four Quartets*)

Then we will be every day opening our eyes anew on a new world, every day picking up our bed afresh and setting out on a new journey, picking up the pieces of our disintegrated lives and our disintegrated world and making a fresh start, uttering the proud and humble word of life-acceptance which will enable the Word to renew us in the "wine-dark sea."

The birth of the Word means that the world's chaos and disintegration must evoke in us not *Angst* and despair but a proud, virile, courageous hope; they are a challenge to battle, and a battle against giants: the giants of go-getting rapacity, of the ratrace, the giants of mammon and materialism, of technocracy and bureaucracy, all the forces that seek to maim and cripple, to degrade and destroy humanity. In the face of the vastness of these vested interests of destruction it is hard not to lose heart and give way to fear and despair; but from the gospels the cry of victory rings out, a voice of much vaster might than those of the giants: "Fear not; I have conquered the world"—and the cry comes from him whom St. Bernard called the *Verbum abbreviatum*, the eternal Word made tiny for love's sake, for life's sake, and beginning the re-integration of the world as a baby, helpless in swaddling-clothes and lying in a manger, in the cave of the new and greater beginning, in the darkness which precedes and proclaims the dawn of a new and lovelier day.

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The Nation's Welfare Dilemma

Newburgh Writ Large

EDWARD T. CHASE

THE PRESS lives on bad news, but occasional stories have happy endings. The Newburgh, N. Y., welfare story, for example, may yet have a relatively happy ending, in that the millions of words in national media devoted to Newburgh in recent months have engendered the biggest public discussion on welfare in the past quarter-century.

All in all, this is to the good. The country has a somewhat better notion now about the size of the welfare problem, what existing programs consist of, what the principal public opinion biases are, and perhaps some (but not much) idea of solutions. There are constructive movements for reforms in many areas.

More concretely, the *dénouement* of the Newburgh story has been the disclosure of the disingenuousness, if not outright dishonesty, of those who created and pressed for the tough new welfare code that precipitated the uproar. For one thing, while he denies it, Newburgh City Manager Joseph McD. Mitchell and his cohorts have now substantially abandoned their new welfare code so as to be able to meet state and Federal law. For example, instead of (illegally) cutting off relief automatically if a mother has another out-of-wedlock child as it threatened (thus punishing children for the sins of the parents), Newburgh will instead investigate the advisability of arranging for foster care for the child.

The most interesting aspect of the nationwide debate over Newburgh has been the public's struggle to comprehend the exact nature of the welfare problem (is chiseling the key? or racial migrations? or a moral collapse in our industrialized urban jungles? etc., etc.), and the public's groping for understanding and solutions. But before getting to this most fruitful topic of causes and solutions, let us first deal with the case of Mr. Mitchell and his friends.

This man whom Republican Presidential aspirant Barry Goldwater publicly hailed and whose original "get tough" program the Arizona Senator was willing to accept *in toto* has us all in his debt. This is the case, first for the point already noted, his arousing the unexpected but most welcome national concern over the welfare problem, and secondly for reminding us how consistently the conservative right lets us down, how negative its contribution to a free society is, and how often its dishonesties are downright embarrassing.

TO START the matter off, Mr. Mitchell and the men around him concocted and then defended a vindictive thirteen-point welfare program founded on erroneous statistics and dubious "facts." The State Social Welfare Board thereupon investigated the matter. Instead of five per cent of Newburgh's population being on relief in 1960, the state inquiry showed the figure was 2.9. Instead of relief rolls being full of able-bodied men as alleged, only ten such men were found on the rolls. Instead of there being numerous cases of fraud, *no* cases of fraud were discovered. Instead of having a larger proportion of its expenditures devoted to relief than comparable sized communities, as alleged, Newburgh was found to have a smaller proportion.

Various other significant findings of fact came out of the investigation. It was brought out for example that as compared with five similar communities Newburgh had the lowest percentage of population on relief, that its non-white population had no undue effect on its welfare costs, and that in a two year period the city had spent only $1,395 on relief payments to "newcomers." Indeed, Newburgh in 1960 had not even qualified for the special welfare aid that went to forty-one of New York State's sixty-five welfare districts for having to provide home relief payments to over one per cent of their population. It is small wonder, then, that Newburgh's welfare commissioner John J. O'Donnell objected to the misrepresentation and illegality of the new program and was compelled to resign. (He was replaced by Peter Z. Petrillo, Jr., a man with some training in physical education but neither training nor experience in welfare.)

Apparently the reliability of Mr. Mitchell's factual assertions has not notably improved in the course of this episode. Not long ago he claimed his program had created a substantial decrease in the number of Newburgh's aid-to-dependent children cases—a drop of twenty-nine cases in a month. Several days later, the

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press reported, Mr. Mitchell conceded he had mistakenly confused monthly and daily totals, and the decrease eventually turned out to be eleven cases. On another recent occasion Mr. Mitchell claimed that twenty to thirty per cent of the births at St. Luke's Hospital in Newburgh were illegitimate. He was promptly disputed on this by hospital official Joseph J. Laskar, who noted that no records of illegitimacy are even kept by the hospital. It is significant, too, that according to the state report published September 28 Newburgh had no one on public work-relief projects, although almost eight hundred persons elsewhere in the state were on such projects. The point, of course, is that Mr. Mitchell claimed Newburgh's relief load included a number of able-bodied men who should be placed on such projects, and it appears he misled us here too; there apparently are not such eligible able-bodied types available.

IT IS CURIOUS how often rightists who are inclined to romantic, even reckless handling of facts are cherished by self-proclaimed conservatives. As a case in point, the Young Americans for Freedom group, which prides itself on its conservatism, recently had Mr. Mitchell as its chief speaker at a meeting. In his speech Mr. Mitchell's main point was that the rights of the Federal and state governments to participate in supervising the welfare activities of local districts (to which they furnish funds) should end and that local governments alone should have authority to administer welfare programs. A great advantage of this, according to Mr. Mitchell, would be that control of welfare would then not fall under the sway of "the social theorists or the social philosophers."

Although in one way this may seem an odd point for Mr. Mitchell to make, since he has lately achieved something of a national reputation as a social theorist himself, the stated disdain for "social theorists" is quite common among men like him who are distressed at what they see as endless encroachments by big and bureaucratic government. In fact, however, the attitude they represent makes such intervention inevitable.

This point was well made some weeks ago by Charles Frankel, one of Columbia University's most distinguished professors. Addressing the National Conference on Social Welfare, Professor Frankel illustrated the matter by posing the hypothetical case of a sick man, for whom the doctor lays out a regimen that should minimize his troubles, the right food, rest, medication, etc. The man ignores the planned program of the doctor, however, and as a result his life, far from being freer, is not his own. The doctor must be called in incessantly, and he intervenes in the poor fellow's life almost daily, and at considerable expense, too.

Professor Frankel's moral is obvious. If we wish to minimize government intervention (and cost), we must, as a society, practice sound social planning. In the health and welfare fields, this will necessarily emphasize preventive and rehabilitative institutions and programs above all else. Instead of this, the American tendency is to resist planning as a subversive practice and to treat welfare problems as "accidents," to be dealt with on an emergency, *ad hoc* basis. The net result is ineffectiveness and an acceleration in government "meddling."

A case in point, as Mr. Frankel observed, is that of the migratory trend of rural persons into industrial urbanized areas. After two hundred and fifty years of experience, surely we should no longer view this development as an emergency or accident but should instead perfect permanent institutions of retraining and relocation. Because we have failed to do this, a great mélange of agencies and departments has had to be developed to cope with the consequences.

The fact that our planning is inadequate should not, of course, be taken to mean that the United States is not as earnest and compassionate a welfare state as the next country. It is. Although the degree of volunteerism (i.e., private individuals and institutions financing and doing the work) and local autonomy in the United States is now unique on this planet, Americans do minister to their dependent and victimized as liberally as any people on earth. Indeed, public and private philanthropy now represents about a tenth of our Gross National Product, and last year private philanthropy alone topped the $8 billion mark. What's more, our over-all welfare programs, both government and private, are, taken together, surprisingly comprehensive and on the whole quite good.

Yet, as Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Ribicoff stated at the same meeting at which Professor Frankel spoke, and as the public reaction to the Newburgh episode has demonstrated, in welfare matters the United States does indeed seem to be drifting, directionless. There is mounting evidence of serious problems, which in turn raise fundamental questions of causes and solutions.

WELFARE PROBLEMS involve three general categories of persons who must be dealt with as dependents: the economically distressed—or "poor people," as they were once called—the ill, and the delinquent. For all our vaunted affluence and efficiency, we are not coping as we should with these "dependents," and we are therefore confronting difficulties of increasingly serious proportions.

In the case of the economically distressed we are talking principally about the hard core of over seven million people on relief (vs. 5,896,900 in 1936). These are concentrated among the unskilled and semi-skilled, and the proportion of the aged is large and growing.

As Professor Frankel pointed out, one of the main advantages of our system of decentralized capitalist

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competition is that it encourages invention and innovations. In an age of applied science, this inevitably leads to technological unemployment, in the broadest sense of the word, because of migration of population from agriculture and increasingly from manufacturing, as the service industries replace the productive industries as absorbers of labor. Thus unemployment due to these causes, rather than exemplifying a malfunctioning of our society, demonstrates that the system is doing well.

In the light of these facts, it is only sensible that we develop high-grade, permanent institutions to cope with this specific welfare problem rather than continue to pretend it is an "accident" of the system requiring only short-range, patchwork expedients. We need institutions of prevention and rehabilitation created as seriously and deliberately as we establish schools. This *means job training or re-training like, for example,* Chicago's successful Cook County public welfare department program which trains relief recipients, or like the still minuscule programs of the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture in depressed rural areas. Here it should be noted that there are now some grounds for hope that the Administration's proposed legislation to provide the sum of $1 billion for retraining the unemployed over the next four years will go through the next Congressional session.

Americans have got to face up to the fundamental and long-term nature of the problems posed by demographic change: first, the emergence of a growing population of the retired elderly; second, the relentless migration from rural to suburban-urban (metropolitan) areas. The large number of desperately distressed people in these categories calls for a revolution in welfare administration—above all for more highly trained, better paid social case workers. The inadequacy in skills as well as numbers in the professional social work field is an open scandal, and so too is the amount of red-tape and general bureaucratic inefficiency.

ANOTHER FACT that we must face up to is that residency laws—laws which set up criteria for welfare benefits based on duration of residence—are anachronistic and bad public policy. Today in the United States thirty-three million people change their residence annually, with eleven million shifting as far as another county and five million moving to another state. Further, there are in the United States some five hundred thousand migratory agricultural laborers, underpaid, underhoused, and by-and-large wanting steady work if they could get it. These are facts which are usually ignored.

Residency laws get public support under false pretenses. The allegation is made that relief rolls are heavy with chiselers attracted by easy living on public benefits, and this is widely believed. That is why the Mahoney bill, a modified residency law, got through the New York State Legislature this past year. But statistics reveal that in New York City only about two per cent of the relief expenditures go to residents of less than a year, and New York's experience on this score is typical. Thus to deny aid to newcomers who are allegedly motivated to migrate by the lure of quick relief would lighten the taxpayers' load hardly at all but would succeed in creating cruel hardships.

There is further nonsense about this. Welfare experts point out that the residence laws of the various states comprise a maze of differences which are further complicated by special rulings of counties and at times even further compounded by special district and community policies. It is preposterous to suppose that vast numbers of indigents are abreast of this and pick their targets accordingly.

What's more, it is overwhelmingly established that all but an insignificant minority of moving persons are seeking decent employment. Welfare workers across the country will tell you that the migrant typically discovers residence restrictions after the fact, generally when he is in trouble and in no position to protect himself. Until he is down and out, it does not occur to him to find out about residence requirements—hardly the behavior of one whose motive in migrating allegedly was to get relief. Residency laws, in sober fact, only accentuate the plight of the deprived and complicate the expensive and arduous tasks of social rehabilitation, of vocational redirection and training.

IN THE SECOND class of dependents, the ill, most Americans fortunately manage to survive one such major episode or even a chronic condition without posing any public welfare problems. However, the combination of skyrocketing hospital and medical costs with the growing numbers of the retired elderly living to ripe old age, when they are beset with costly infirmities, is posing a momentous public issue.

Outside of the American Medical Association hierarchy, hardly an expert in the land believes that this problem cannot best be met by broadening the Social Security laws so as to finance the elderly's medical care. Social Security, after all, was designed to cope with loss of income. The retired elderly among those over sixty-five are nowadays denied a place in the work force; they have reduced incomes and more disability; hence they fully qualify for aid to cope with this special circumstance.

Beyond this, the alarming inflation in medical care costs is producing welfare problems that are not confined to the elderly. Regional planning of health care facilities; federal aid to subsidize more medical schools, more medical school teachers, and tuition aid to students in order to increase the supply of doctors; the encouragement of the group practice of medicine; the

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adoption of modern techniques to treat the mentally ill—these are among the necessary priorities to make our health care system more efficient and in slowing the inflationary spiral. If the lag in reform in these areas is allowed to persist, the incidence of serious illness will increasingly create financial crises which will throw more and more border-line families into the public welfare category.

FINALLY, there are the delinquents, the third class of dependents associated with the over-all welfare problem. The need for the rehabilitation of our penal population is obvious, but the fantastic rise in juvenile delinquency presents a challenge that has hardly begun to be understood as yet, let alone solved.

A powerful case has been made lately to connect this particular welfare problem with the fact that a vast population of the young cannot find enough constructive things to do. This is a dilemma that should excite intense concern, pointing as it does at serious deficiencies in our community response to those in need of decent work, a useful function in society and confidence in their social status. If our new generations are so demoralized (and the statistics involve the suburban middle-class as well as the "multi-problem" families of slums that constitute welfare's greatest single burden), the future is not very bright. Only a massive assault involving the creation of new institutions of rehabilitation and training, and better basic environmental conditions across the board (housing, education, recreation, city planning, etc.) will turn the tide. And no matter what Newburgh's City Manager thinks, there simply are no cheap shortcuts.

The prospects for the kind of action that is needed on this or any of the other major welfare problems we face are not bright—or at least they are not bright if the initial public approval of the know-nothing response of the Newburgh City Council is an accurate reflection of majority American opinion. But events themselves, quite apart from theory, have a way of determining public programs in the United States, and speeches by Mr. Mitchell and Senator Goldwater will not make our very real problems disappear. Touching off as it did an all but incredible volume of publicity, the Newburgh episode may quite unintentionally have marked the beginning of a new era of creativity in welfare.

Where the Freedom Riders Faced Their Trial

Return to Jackson

CARL RACHLIN

IN MANY RESPECTS, Jackson, Mississippi, is one of the more modern cities in the United States. New construction is evident everywhere, and scaffolding delays passage on many of the city's sidewalks. It is not, of course, that Jackson is in the American time scale a young city, but that its growth has taken place in good part since World War II, which makes it appear much younger than it is. A new-old division is perhaps symbolized by the city's two capitol buildings—one fresh and modern, the other a still attractive ante-bellum edifice but now nothing more than a museum. One might wish that the ideas associated with the old state capitol had also been replaced by a new set of ideas.

Looking at the stately old buildings, it is easy to see that life here must have been extraordinarily pleasant in pre-Civil War days, if one were of the right complexion. In fact, as I breathed the air of old Jackson I thought of nothing so much as technicolor Hollywood versions of life in the Old South. Hollywood came closer to the truth than I had thought.

The fabled Southern courtesy, for instance, is real. Although my three trips to Jackson were for various legal procedures in behalf of the Congress of Racial Equality, at no time was I addressed by anyone in even a faintly discourteous manner. Small favor upon favor, unexpected acts of good will, pleasantries—these were the norm that all my associates and I encountered

Only once was I even reproved for my role and the reason for my being in Jackson. One public official observed to me, more in sorrow than anger, that I had come to Jackson to change their way of life. Faced with this truth, even in a tone of mild chastisement, how could I seriously protest? I had indeed come to change their way of life, that is, the way of life of fifty-one per cent of the population.

In fact, CORE, and I as its personification at that moment, had come rather to change the way of life of the other forty-nine per cent, the Negroes no longer in slavery, but definitely less than first-class citizens in

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Mississippi. While my reprover may not have had this in mind when he spoke, its truth is no less certain. Indeed, on reflection the charge of changing a way of life seems far more applicable to the forty-nine per cent than to the slim majority. For a strong case can be made that the changes we hoped for in Mississippi could only bring gain to the smaller group, not loss to the greater.

Ironically, however, while the people of Jackson are trying desperately to retain their ante-bellum race divisions, they are devoting every effort to joining the rest of the modern world economically. During my stay in Jackson, a special session of the legislature was called for the purpose of amending the state constitution so that certain oil resources could be effectively used. There was almost a child-like quality in the beliefs expressed as to the benefits to be gained from this amendment.

Oil has become the black gold of Mississippi. Perhaps they couldn't pave the streets with it, but it would flow and flow and flow, Mississippians assured me, and they would thrive and thrive and thrive. All this while they have the lowest per capita income of any of the fifty states! Somehow it seems not to occur to them that there is any connection between this unhappy fact and their traditional way of life.

DREAMING of the past is of course part of all our lives, but we return to the present quickly enough when we have to. Mississippians, however, seem able to ignore the pressures of the present. The Confederacy itself was in large part a romantic dream designed to deny the future and keep yesterday alive, an attempt to stop the time machine and make it play the same cherished day over and over again. What can one think, for example, of a young man who has been to college, served in the U.S. Army, become a lawyer and been elected a judge, who nevertheless, in 1961, maintains in his judicial chambers as almost the sole adornments a large picture of Robert E. Lee and a Confederate flag? The present-day equivalent of the dream of the Confederacy, it seems to me, is Negro segregation, and that is why it can be maintained even in the face of all rationality.

Prior to the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision of 1954, segregation was maintained openly in the South as a righteous way of life. Since that case and its repercussions, however, it appears that Mississippians are turning more and more to hypocrisy. Subterfuge after subterfuge has been used to prevent Negroes from achieving the full rights of citizenship, from the "grandfather clause" and the poll tax to prevent him from voting, and the cruel pretense of "separate but equal" educational facilities, to the present flood of "disorderly conduct" laws. Moreover, it is an old story that the practice of segregation is bent to meet certain practical economic necessities—in retail stores, banks, domestic arrangements, etc.

Perhaps we should look upon this very hypocrisy as a portent of a better future, however, a necessary if unpleasant step towards real desegregation. Support for such a view can be drawn from the history of most Northern communities, where hypocrisy in desegregation is routine. It is only in recent years that New York City, for instance, has devoted any serious efforts to desegregating its schools. New York's segregation is of course "de facto," the result of extra-legal but rigidly observed ghettoizing of the city's housing. New Rochelle, N.Y., is presently in the news in this regard, but few Northern communities could escape completely the charge of similar hypocrisy.

Not many years ago, in many Northern cities the "better" restaurants refused to serve Negroes, nor would theaters sell them tickets for orchestra seats. And Chicago and New York have been shamed by race violence as well as Little Rock and New Orleans. Let us be optimistic then when we see Mississippians forced to hypocritical defenses of racial segregation.

Racial hypocrisy, incidentally, is not the only kind practiced in Mississippi. Jackson is part of a dry county, but good restaurants there serve setups as a matter of course. And I noticed, in a very large motel in Jackson, conveniently located are several large bins containing thousands of ice cubes. Perhaps the ice cubes are to serve the soda dispensing machines nearby, but the soda comes out of the machines cold anyway. Suffice it to say that law enforcement officials of neighboring Alabama laugh when anyone refers to Mississippi as dry.

THE NEW "disorderly conduct" laws are the latest hypocritical means of protecting a system which has become otherwise indefensible. Now that Mississippi—with Louisiana and other states soon to follow—hides its enforcement of segregation behind such statutes, we may expect a period of many arrests of Negroes for failing to move on when directed by police to leave "whites only" premises. The pretense of the law is its emphasis on failure to obey a police order; the reality, of course, is a legal weapon against the Negro who has dared to use a white facility in a public place.

At this time it would be improper to discuss one's arguments before the United States Supreme Court, except that it will be our job to show the reality behind the façade of the disorderly conduct laws. If we cannot pierce the veneer of pretended impartiality (on their face the statutes might be considered impartial, in many respects similar to the New York disorderly conduct statute), then we are in for a period of difficulty. If we cannot successfully urge that a citizen has the right under certain circumstances to refuse an unreasonable police order to move on, then the possibility

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A Welcome Christmas Gift

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of legal success becomes small indeed, and presumably the CORE tactic of direct, non-violent action must be expanded. Reliance then will not be upon the usual legal processes.

Perhaps the most discouraging aspect of the present situation in Jackson is the role of the clergy there. The largest religious group is the Southern Baptists, with Methodists next and Presbyterians fewer still, and with a very few exceptions the ministry is either silent on the issue of segregation or positively defending it. Moreover, while the large religious groups are condoning if not supporting segregation, the minority groups are failing to speak out as they do elsewhere.

As I write this, I have just returned from Jackson after the trial of the fifteen Episcopalian priests, led by the Reverend John B. Morris of Atlanta and the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity, who were arrested in Jackson's Trailways Bus Terminal. Whether their arrest and trial will awaken the consciences of clergymen of other groups remains to be seen. Certainly it was a moving moment at the trial when the court was told of the circumstances of their arrest. As they were taken into custody they won respectful and I think meaningful silence when, in unison, they recited the Lord's Prayer.

Isolated voices of the ministry have been heard from time to time here, and in a few cities the combined voices of several clergymen, proclaiming the law of love for one's neighbor and the evil of segregation. But how much it would mean if the voice of religion in the South were to become loud and unequivocal on the subject of race! We can fight racial injustice on legal grounds; we can battle it through non-violent action; but nothing would help so much in awakening the conscience of the community as the united voice of all ministers of religion.

Such a development is, of course, only wishful dreaming, and perhaps to expect it is to be unfair to the clergymen who are caught up in these unhappy problems. But what is to be done then? We can first separate the elements of the situation to see which we can handle. Wrong and unfortunate racial attitudes are of course at the base of the problem, but what results from these attitudes, these states of mind, are *acts* of discrimination. Bypassing all the debate and controversy on how to deal with the basic problem of attitude, we can at least concentrate on the acts, and here the only procedure which promises some immediate relief is the imposition, from the outside, of the moral force of the law against acts of segregation.

If we apply the legal sanctions vigorously, we can move a long way towards the end of segregation (and we can do this with other forms of discrimination such as the denial of economic opportunity to Negroes). Let us at least do this. From our experience in Northern communities we know that, despite opposition and frus-

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trating attempts to block or evade the effects of good laws, such as fair employment laws, eventually these laws are obeyed. So will it be, I am convinced, if we impose legal sanctions to end acts of segregation.

It is too much to expect this problem of discrimination to be solved from within. No one, or at least not many, in the South can be like the child in *The Emperor's Clothes* and proclaim as wisdom what is merely obvious. Segregation as a way of life is no more than an unpleasant hangover in a modern society, but the Southerner who sees this cannot fairly be expected to say it for fear of the calumny and reprisals his statement would provoke. This being so, the outsider who is less vulnerable can take the risks of the wise child; he can proclaim the obvious. Even the emperor accepted the disturbing truth in time, and we can expect as much from the citizens of Mississippi—eventually.

Yesterday, Without a Word

Yesterday, without a word
My tongue fell out
With such a thump on the floor
That the whole house shook itself.

"Dear God,"
Called my mother from downstairs
"What has happened?"

I wanted to say, "Nothing, Momma,
Don't cry.
Nothing.
And if something has happened it won't hurt anyone."

And that would have been another lie.
And the tongue fell out
Because I had already told too many lies.

Well! so I couldn't answer
I heard my mother
Weeping and complaining.
I knew that she stood
With wet hands, salting meat
On a Friday evening,
Agonized and stubborn, with tears in her eyes,
And salt water on her hands
Wondering to herself
What had happened.

And I—
I did not answer.

Without a tongue,
One cannot even tell
The truth.

LEONARD WOLF

THE SCREEN

By Love Possessed

IF THERE ARE still people around who think all Russian movies are propaganda pieces, they should be sent at once to see the latest arrival in the cultural exchange program. The only propaganda they'll find in "A Summer To Remember" is that ordinary children and their parents in Russia are like ordinary children and their parents everywhere else. Told from the point of view of a five-year-old boy, "Summer" is a delight from beginning to end, and along with its collection of radiant and everyday incidents from a boy's world, it also manages to present a few adults with startling reality.

Although episodic, the film has amazing unity, and the episodes add up to a moving whole that lets us know little Seryozha well—in his relationships with his mother (Irana Skobtseva) and his new father when she marries again, in his games and companionship with his playmates (most of whom are older and naughtier than he), and in his own imaginative flights of fancy, as when, heartbroken because the family is going to leave him behind when they move, he listens to his goldfish discuss the sad situation.

The lead role in "Summer" is played to perfection by a cute—but not too cute—little towhead named Borya Barkhatov, who seems not to be acting but just being as he laughs, cries, sulks, enjoys, listens and gazes with wonder at everything that's going on. He views his new father with apprehension, but this big, warm-hearted man (played with fine sensitivity and strength by Sergei Bondarchuk) soon allays the boy's fears. He takes him to town, from the province where they live, to buy a new bicycle, and he mends it when Seryozha's friends bust it up the very first day; he takes him to the cooperative farm which he directs, much to the awe of the admiring boy; he softens the boy's jealousy over the attention-winning new baby. This growing love and understanding between the boy and man are among the many pleasures of this handsomely-photographed picture, which is often humorous, often touching but never maudlin. No doubt major credit for this state of affairs should go to directors Georgy Danelia and Igor Talankin, who did wonders with the children and who wrote the screenplay with Vera Panova, author of the original story, but everyone connected with "A Summer To Remember" deserves a hand.

AT LAST MONTH'S Stockholm premiere of his newest film, the highly acclaimed "Through a Glass Darkly," Ingmar Bergman spoke as if he were just starting on his major cinema work. "This is Opus Number One," he said in an interview. "The twenty-three other pictures

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I have made have been only études." I suppose one shouldn't argue with the master, but it is hard to think of such outstanding movies as "The Seventh Seal," "The Magician" and especially "Wild Strawberries" as only études. In any case, next year's arrival of "Through a Glass Darkly" is clearly something to look forward to eagerly. In the meantime we have to settle for an étude: "The Devil's Eye," the latest Bergman to be released in this country.

Directed and written by Bergman, and beautifully photographed by Gunnar Fischer, as are so many of his films, "The Devil's Eye" is indeed an exercise, a sort of stylized modern morality play, complete with an occasional narrator (Gunnar Bjornstrand), harpsichord music by Scarlatti, and an opening quotation which I suspect Bergman made up to fit the story: "A woman's chastity is a sty in the Devil's eye." The action begins in hell where Satan (Stig Jarrel), annoyed by his sty and the fact that a woman's chastity is a challenge to the nether regions, sends the long-suffering Don Juan (Jarl Kulle) to earth to seduce a vicar's daughter. When this attractive and virginal young lady (made even more attractive by Bibi Andersson) quarrels with her fiancé, the way is open for the experienced Don. But when, as a guest in her father's house, he comes to her in the night only to find that she is willing to submit to him out of pity and not through love, the famous Don Juan realizes he is not the great seducer he thought. Furthermore, he has fallen in love with the girl, and he returns to hell—a failure.

The story is as simple as that; but the trimmings, visual and verbal (for this is a very talky film) are many, and some of these are bright challenges to keep the viewer on his toes, while a few are only passably entertaining and not as stimulating as Bergman thought. The punishments meted out to Don Juan are appropriately hellish. Before he is sent on the mission, his tortures are always the same: to his boudoir in hell comes one of his former conquests whom he seduces up to the point of acquiescence, only to have a voice then inform him, "The performance is over," marking the end of that almost-but-never-completed conquest. And when he returns to hell after having failed to seduce the virgin, he is made to go through worse pain as he jealously listens to a vivid account of her wedding night.

"The Devil's Eye" has a great deal to say about love and sex. Before Bergman is finished with his argument, he involves the cold, unpassionate vicar, his sex-starved wife and Don Juan's servant who accompanies the great lover to earth and who after three hundred years in hell is longing to make a beast of himself. While this triangle is not particularly amusing, it does at least lead the vicar and his wife to new understanding of themselves. The film as a whole may not lead its audiences to any similar improvement in self-understanding, but no recent Bergman films are without some merit, and this one as a variation on Shaw or Mozart has its assets. For all its slickness, however, it is a lesser étude and should make Bergman enthusiasts, of whom I am one, all the more happy to learn that in Bergman's thinking he is now really starting on his serious film career.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

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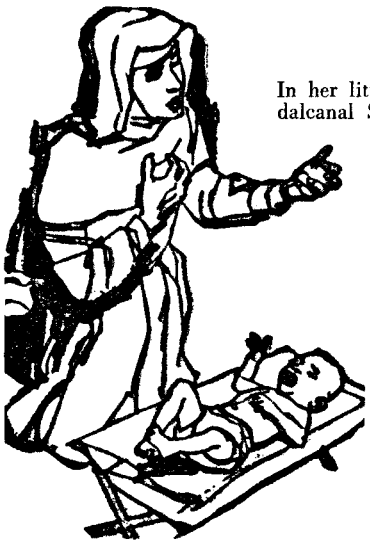

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THE STAGE

A Setback for Kitsch

ORDINARILY there wouldn't be much point in holding a post-mortem on a play which died with such speed and finality as did "Look: We've Come Through." But in some quarters there seems to be a lingering atmosphere of regret and even of dismay; there are signs that a monument is about to be erected inscribed with some such words as these: Here lies a Martyred Drama.

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Youngest child of Hugh Wheeler. It Lacked the Commercial Virtues. Which is the sort of nonsense that makes a critic put aside other things in order to try to clear the air of its cultural smog.

Does it still need to be said that good and serious plays do die on Broadway just because they are too good and serious to hold out against the *sturm und drang* of commercialism? But "Look: We've Come Through" wasn't such a play. It was a bad play, more accurately perhaps, a false play; although its existence as a symptom does confer on it a posthumous interest. And what it is symptomatic of is the continuing, possibly worsening, confusion which exists between art and *kitsch*—the ape of art—on Broadway as everywhere else in the world.

The miasma of self-pity, spurious estheticism and pretensions to seriousness which surrounds the play's demise was to be discovered swirling across the stage when it was alive. If one had seen Mr. Wheeler's "Big Fish, Little Fish" of last season, or only remembered the language with which the sad starved *higher-type* reviewers had greeted it—"compassionate," "earnest," "haunting," "memorable power," "a playwright of rare sensitivity"—the diction of half-brows and quarter-minds—one would have been prepared for what "L.:W.C.T." in fact was: an exercise in pseudo-sophistication, a simulacrum of everything bold and honest and discontented and urgent. It was, as I have said, a piece of *kitsch*.

Now *kitsch* is of course not simply a matter of popular culture but of popular culture masquerading as art. And if we keep in mind what the main concerns of art are today, remembering that it deals with isolation, fragmented consciousness, a struggle with worn-out substances and procedures, the sword-dance over the abyss, and so on, we may find it easier to identify *kitsch* where it is likely to appear: not in country music or TV situation comedy or confessional fiction but in the revival of folk music, in Reginald Rose's or Rod Serling's kind of TV drama, in "Marjorie Morningstar" and in that spectrum of plays whose upper band is occupied by Lillian Helman and William Inge and whose lower by William Gibson and Dore Schary, with Hugh Wheeler somewhere in the middle.

Mr. Wheeler has peopled his stage with figures out of a contemporary "Canterbury Tales," everyone in motion, on "our" kinds of pilgrimage, a young actress and actor on the make, an agent stretching for his cut, at the center a pair of naive lovers hungering for "reality." The girl is plain, stringy-haired, horn-rimmed, addicted to Dylan Thomas records and Indian art and with a flow of expressions like "fighting for your indentity"; the boy is lower-class, crude but honest and uncorrupted, Holden Caulfield behind the shipping-desk. And they "come through," they extricate themselves from the "others" swamp of ego and their own radical innocence, becoming wisely "simple" and transfigured through a liberating act of mutual acceptance of loneliness and need.

At least that is what is supposed to happen. If it does, it is only by interpolation, by the audience's reading into the inadequate dramatic action the meaning that should have flowed from it. Yes, to be seduced as a calculated act *should* mean that the girl will discover the hopelessness of her esthetic approach to sex and love (the play's title is from D. H. Lawrence's poem, and Lawrence's vaunted "wholeness" and spontaneity about sex is one of the sources of the girl's illusions). And, yes, to be made to know that his homosexual friends really mean business should teach the boy a lesson in the dangers of trust which has been misplaced.

Yet there is no sense of discovery, since caricature can't communicate anything but an established, already staked-out reality. Nor is there any sense of struggle, something that might have given meaning to "coming through," because what happens to the characters is imposed on them and they have only to react according to the lax, unexamined, publicly admirable, wish-fulfilling canons of modern humanism, than which there is no more central ingredient in *kitsch*. Like Marjorie Morningstar deciding to give up all that terribly false way of life and settle for domestic truth, Wheeler's lovers *decide* to be mature, jettisoning all those dreadful egotisms and abstractions. Look: it's really as simple as that.

Still, I can't quite understand why the play failed as a commercial venture. After all, Lillian Helman succeeds with an only slightly slicker product. There was some introductory humor of a brittle kind (incidental observation: plays of this sort invariably open by working for laughs, then wheel up the serious stuff—the clowns coming on before the high-wire act) and some quite charming performances, most notably by Zohra Lampert as the actress and Ralph Williams as H. Caulfield *manqué*. There was even, to be fair, some real if arbitrary emotion in the final scenes. Of course, by that point in the proceedings it was too late; and yet is it ever too late for the craving for illusions to be satisfied? (*Closed at the Hudson.*)

THERE IS only the barest space left to mention Eugene O'Neill's "Diff'rent." All of O'Neill's defects are in evidence in this little-known work: the strained naturalistic dialogue, the flatness when he goes philosophical or exegetical, the split between the dramatized events and the "mystery" lurking above and behind them and to which they aspire. But at least it isn't false; it represents urgency and pressure and an artist's task, half-fulfilled, as was almost always the case with O'Neill, but attempted and full of true achievements along the way. (*At the Mermaid.*) RICHARD GILMAN

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A Catholic-Protestant Confrontation

Christianity Divided. Edited by Daniel J. Callahan, Heiko A. Oberman, and Daniel J. O'Hanlon, S.J. Sheed and Ward. $6.

by Gregory Baum

SHEED and Ward is to be congratulated for the venture of publishing a collection of theological articles of the highest quality by leading Protestant and Catholic scholars, the first of its kind to appear in English. The editors have divided the book into five parts, each dedicated to an area of theology of central significance and vital interest to the Protestant-Catholic dialogue. These five sections are: Scripture and Tradition, Rules of Biblical Interpretation, The Church, The Sacraments, and Justification. For each area the editors have chosen one article by a Catholic and one or two by Protestant scholars. The articles are prefaced by intelligent introductions placing the authors and their work in the wider context of their own Church.

This confrontation of Protestant and Catholic thought is not meant to serve the ends of apologetics. Indeed, the reader looking for arguments "against" the position of "the others" will be thoroughly disappointed. Each author deals with his subject according to one ideal: to be more faithful to the truth of the Gospel. It is precisely because the apologetical concern has been dropped that the authors feel free to be truly creative in their thought and to go beyond many positions which one had thought to be "traditional."

The editors undoubtedly had a difficult time selecting suitable articles from the vast number of eligible essays. Not everyone will agree with their choice in each case. The Protestant authors are all orthodox Christians, men who have rejected thoroughly and completely the liberal gospel. They all believe in man's need of redemption, in the judgment of God on sinful humanity, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the reconciliation of the world in God's victory. They therefore represent only a section of contemporary Protestantism.

The most captivating of the Protestant essays is, as one might expect, that of Karl Barth on the concept of the Church. It is the only "old" article in the book, having first appeared in German in 1927. Even though it does not represent the main trends of modern Protestant ecclesiology or the key thinking in the World Council of Churches, it is significant in itself. It magnificently sets forth a tremendous vision of the work of Christ, one which no Catholic theologian should ignore.

Here, as so often, Barth is the vehement, tempting, and lovable prophet enunciating a false interpretation of the Gospel which nevertheless possesses more authentic elements than many an orthodox commentary. Yet in the present article on the mystery of the Church, as in many of his other works, he does not really wrestle with all of the significant scriptural passages. And it seems to me that he overlooks some parts of the biblical revelation, while lacking the excuse that his bias is determined by tradition.

Every one of the Protestant authors deserves mention. The articles by Oscar Cullmann on tradition and by Thomas F. Torrance on justification have already appeared in English in *The Scottish Journal of Theology*, and Heiko A. Oberman's essay on the theology of preaching was first published in *Theology Today*. But to the Catholic reader they will, for the most part, be new. Max Thurian, Ernst Fuchs, and A. A. van Ruler, though well known on the continent, have never been published in English. The present articles by Cullmann and Thurian are readable and interesting even for the non-theologian.

The Catholic reader will, however, find most of the Catholic contributions of even greater importance. They will acquaint him with recent theological developments in the Church which, sad to say, have not yet sufficiently penetrated Catholic thought, teaching, and action. J. Geiselmann, for instance, writing on scripture and tradition, appears for the first time in English. He treats here the doctrine for which he has become famous in Europe, the meaning of the Church's divine tradition. Geiselmann claims that the Council of Trent did not propose a double-source theory of revelation, as if the divine word of salvation came to us partly in the Bible and partly through an (undefined) tradition. Instead, he holds that the Council agreed with the ancient Catholic teaching that divine revelation is both in scripture *and* tradition, that these are not two separated sources, but one single source, the tradition of the Church being the light in which the scriptures are read and understood. The English-speaking reader may be familiar with this important thesis through Fr. George Tavard's great study, *Holy Writ or Holy Church.*

Reading E. H. Schillebeeckx's article on the sacraments as an encounter with God will be for many a real theological relief, a long overdue work of correction. Fr. Schillebeeckx, who has never been published in English (though one of his books is now being translated), is able to set the sacramental practice of the Church into the context of the Incarnation and of man's encounter with the self-revealing God in Jesus Christ. This is an article which every priest should read whether he belongs to the priesthood of the faithful or to that of the ordained.

The celebrated young Hans Küng, the theological *wunderkind*—he is only 32 and a professor at Tübingen —has an article on justification in the New Testament. It brings out with extraordinary emphasis the point that God is the author and always remains the author of our justification and sanctification. Küng has become famous through his book on justification, in which he sets out to prove that Karl Barth's doctrine on the subject is substantially identical with that of Catholic tradition and the Council of Trent.

In the present article his concern

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is to protect the pauline-augustinian-thomistic doctrine of divine transcendence and divine initiative, which is part and parcel of the Catholic tradition but which has not really become part of the spirituality of the ordinary people or of the religious convictions of the average priest. The power and courage of Küng's style, a little heavy in English, give the reader a foretaste of his best-selling book, *The Council and Reunion,* a brilliant work, which Sheed and Ward is about to bring out in English.

Among the Catholic contributors are two North Americans, Father David Stanley, S.J., from Canada and Father Gustave Weigel, S.J., from the United States. Father Stanley's profound and clear article on hermeneutics appeared in *Theological Studies* in 1959 and has since then been a "must" for all seminarians and serious students of the Bible. On the other hand, Father Weigel's contribution on ecclesiology, a chapter of his new book, *Catholic Theology in Dialogue,* while a most stimulating essay, does not quite succeed in being the complement to Karl Barth's masterpiece.

This excellent volume demonstrates the need for scholarship and the power of patient research, guided by the Spirit, to bring Catholics and Protestants closer together.

Waugh Fils

The Foxglove Saga. Auberon Waugh. Simon and Schuster. $3.95.

by Anne Fremantle

THERE is a perennial battle between those who claim that heredity is the dominant factor in personality and the others who insist environment is all. Lately, the quarrel has been exacerbated by politics: the West has stood squarely by genes, while in Russia it has become criminal to deny Lysenko's assertion that acquired characteristics can be inherited.

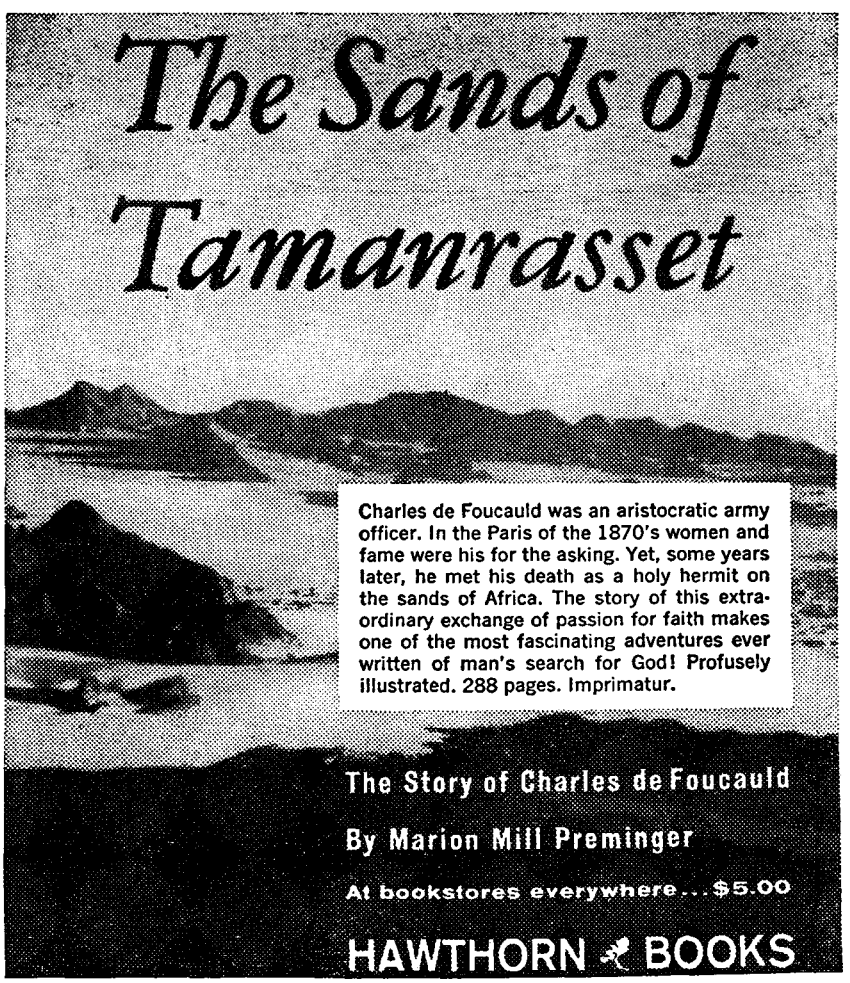
A few statistics in support of the West. There were twenty-four Medicis distinguished in politics, seven Peels, several Pitts. In mathematics twenty-one Bernouillis were famous, in biology eleven Darwins, in letters six de Staels and three Coleridges, in music 45 Bachs (six generations), in painting four Van Eycks, four Holbeins, four Murillos, three Bellinis.

To all this can now be added the new literary dynasty of Waugh. Evelyn and Alec, two major contemporary novelists, had a bookseller-publisher father; now Auberon, Evelyn's son and Alec's nephew, aged twenty-two, has proved himself something of a satirical genius with his first novel.

Auberon Waugh was educated at a famous Catholic public school and later fought with the British army in the Suez campaign, being badly wounded and spending a long time in the hospital. His first novel deals faithfully with a well-known Catholic school, a famous British regiment and several hospitals.

"The Foxglove Saga" is the story of three mouseketeers. The ostensible hero is Martin Foxglove, his face "like one of the beautifully formal idealized portraits of the Umbrian Quattrocento. No human being could guess what was going on behind those enormous, sad brown eyes set in a perfectly oval face of golden amber underneath raven black hair whose neatness was uncanny." Martin's father, Sir Derek, is a good surgeon, a simple man whose wife, Julia, at the age of forty-five, "still possessed the extraordinary, sublime beauty of a quattrocento madonna."

She appears at Cleeve school to make arrangements for Brother Thomas' move to a hospital reserved for the dying, and at dinner meets her son's friend, Kenneth Stoat. Kenneth's father is a dentist; Kenneth himself is ugly and common, and Julia Foxglove, gazing yearningly at Brother Aloysius, does what she can to break up the unsuitable friendship.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The third friend is William O'Connor, who deserts from the army and spends considerable time in a military prison. The many and various adventures of these three, uneasily friends and inextricably linked, include robbery, blackmail, every form of spivving and a good many low kinds of amusement. The richness of Mr. Waugh's inventiveness never palls; the sequences in various lunatic asylums are as gay and rambunctious as those among the Pigs (the Guards) where Martin Foxglove loses face by telling the truth about his sex-life and regains it by means of a lecture on his holiday on safari in Kenya.

Mr. Waugh is no Montaigne—he is not laughing at life in order to avoid the sorrow of things. He is, rather, a latterday Swift, as savage, as sincere, as almost unbearably iconoclastic.

Sometimes, I think, he goes too far. Julia Foxglove's secret notebook in which she puts tiny ticks against her daily good works—Clothe the Naked, for example, when she dresses the monster child Tarquin in Martin's yellow velvet page's suit so that the Cruelty-to-Children inspector shall find things in order—is a constant joy, but there is a burial sermon scene that's a bit thick and another bedroom episode that's even thicker. Worst of all is Julia's own unlamented death, a thing well-deserved but badly done.

Still, the one problem that occurs to the reader of this preposterously brilliant first effort is this: since Mr. Waugh has successfully planted his needle in Education, the Army, the Medical profession and the Church, what is left for him in his next book? Politics, perhaps?

The Agonizing Voice of the Poor

The Children of Sanchez. By Oscar Lewis. Random House. $7.50.

by Michael Harrington

IN THE nineteenth century, the novelist was one of the main carriers of sociological insight. Balzac, Dickens, George Eliot, Tolstoy and Stendhal told more about the life of their societies than most of the scholars. In the twentieth century this relationship seemed to reverse itself. The novelist turned inward to explore states of consciousness and mind; the sociologist took over the rendering of social textures. Norman Mailer once reviewed a book by David Riesman as if it were a novel.

Oscar Lewis represents a new and important departure. His *Children of Sanchez* is anthropology and sociology. It records the impact of urban life and industrialization on a Mexican family with roots in the countryside. It describes the poverty of these people in agonizing detail; in this aspect it is sociology. And yet this book is something else again. The children of Sanchez (and Sanchez himself) speak in their own voices—the subtitle is "Autobiography of a Mexican family." This is no dry, technical description of the poor. It is an artful study, and it reeks with the stench of poverty; it has the material, palpable quality one associates with fiction.

This synthesis is in itself an achievement. Reading the book, for instance, I suddenly heard echoes of Durrell's Alexandria quartet. There are five observers in *The Children of Sanchez* and they often treat of the same incidents and events. The speakers are poor Mexicans with little education, yet the psychological complexity which they convey, the different versions of the same happening, are every bit as involved and intricate as the meditations of Durrell's decadents.

In method alone, then, *The Children of Sanchez* is an important accomplishment. My only criticism here would be that the material is too extensive, too long. But that may be a function of the sociological purpose, of valuing the sheer bulk of information as against more artful editing. In any case, this is only a minor distraction: *The Children of Sanchez* is, in the mode of its conception, a very real achievement.

The substance of the book is a description of Mexican poverty. It is grim, depressing and fascinating. The first thing which struck me was the similarity between the Mexican and the American poor. Poverty in the United States rests upon a much higher standard of living; it is not so extreme. Yet the basic patterns of human response seem to be the same despite this important difference.

In Mexico, as in America, the poor tend toward acting out, to immediate gratification rather than to saving, to

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sexual promiscuity (or, more precisely, "serial monogamy," that is, faithfulness to a single person for a given period of time, then moving on) and so on. In this, poverty would seem to be a culture, a way of life, no matter what its broader economic setting may be.

And yet, there was one striking difference which I noticed between the Mexican and the American poor. One of the most important aspects of poverty in the United States is psychological. The impoverished are pessimistic about themselves and the world, they are defeated, more prone to neuroses and psychoses than any other group in the society. In *The Children of Sanchez* one finds evidence of the same attitudes, but somehow the spiritual trauma seems less damaging than in the United States.

One possible explanation of this difference has to do with the national setting of the two poverties. In the United States, the poor are a minority (this is probably the first time in history this has happened). As a consequence, the best spirits, the most adventurous and talented, have been gone from the slum world for at least a generation. Those who remain behind include a high number of failures and rejects. This is much less true in minority groups, for there poverty is still the general condition of life. This, I think, is one explanation of the superior vitality of the American Negro or Puerto Rican when compared to the poor white.

In Mexico, of course, poverty is much more extensive than in the United States. As a result, the slum still contains many who have innate talent and curiosity—the poor have not yet been segregated from contact with the great world as in the United States. The result is that there is more of a psychological élan, there are more individualists and creative people. In any case, the vitality which often appears in *The Children of Sanchez* is one of the main factors which distinguishes the Mexican and the American poor.

In reviewing the book, I have almost necessarily concentrated upon what is sociological in it: upon the ideas rather than the textures. But in closing, it is important to return to Lewis's method.

And on this score, the exciting thing about *The Children of Sanchez*, the fact which makes it a new point of departure in its field, is its humanity, its quality of projecting the individual, agonizing voice of the poor as they describe their own plight. This is a real accomplishment, original and full of substance.

REVIEWERS

Father Gregory Baum, O.S.A., is a member of the faculty of St. Michael's College, the University of Toronto, and the author of *That They May Be One.*

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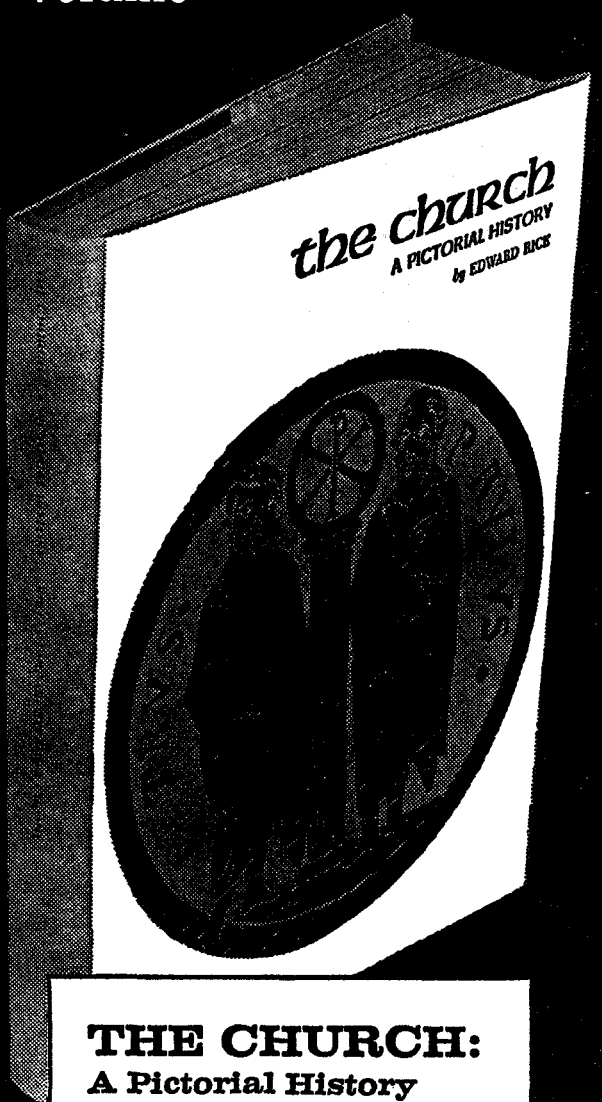

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